



2005 Election Reform Package

SECRETARY OF STATE SAM REED

Clarifying and standardizing various election procedures Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5499

Identification at the polls

A poll voter must show one of the following: photo identification (ID), utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, student ID, tribal ID, or other government document.

If a poll voter does not have any identification, he or she must be given a provisional ballot.

Provisional voters must have a way to determine whether or not their vote was counted.

Provisional & Absentee Ballots/Envelopes

Provisional and absentee ballots must be visually distinguishable from poll ballots and either imprinted with a bar code or printed on color paper.

Provisional and absentee ballots must be incapable of tabulation at poll site counting machines.

Absentee ballot return envelopes must include a secrecy flap that will cover the voter's signature and optional telephone number.

The declaration (signed by the voter) must inform the voter that it is illegal to vote if not a citizen, or if voting rights have not been restored, and it's illegal to cast/sign a ballot on behalf of another voter.

Returned ballot envelopes must be kept in a secure location until opened.

Ballot Enhancement

Ballot enhancement is prohibited.

Ballot Duplication

A ballot may be duplicated if it is damaged or incapable of being counted by the machine. In this case, the ballot must be referred to the Canvassing Board or duplicated if so authorized by the board. The intent of the voter must be clear.

All duplication is handled by teams of 2 people.

An audit trail must be created.

Missing or Mismatched Signature

Statewide standards for signature verification are required, and persons verifying signatures must be trained on the standards.

If voters neglect to sign a provisional or absentee ballot, the Auditor must notify the voter by telephone, and if not possible, by first class mail. Voters must then either appear in person and sign, or sign a copy of the envelope and return it. Resolution of signatures must be done no later than the day before certification.

If the signature doesn't match because the name is different, the ballot can be counted as long as the handwriting is clearly the same.

A voter may not solve a missing or mismatched signature during a recount for purposes of having the ballot counted in the recount.

A record must be kept of all ballots with missing and mismatched signatures. The record must contain the date the voter was contacted or notice was mailed, as well as the date the voter corrected their signature. The contact records are public record.

Ballot Reconciliation

County Auditors must prepare two public reconciliation reports.

First report, due by certification, includes the number of registered voters and the number of ballots counted, with a breakdown as follows:

- Number of provisional ballots issued, counted, and rejected
- Number of absentee ballots issued, counted, and rejected
- Number of federal write-in ballots counted
- Number of out-of-state, overseas and service ballots issued, counted and rejected

Second report, due within 30 days of certification, includes the number of registered voters and the number of voters credited with voting, with a breakdown as follows:

- Number of poll voters credited with voting
- Number of provisional voters credited with voting
- Number of absentee voters credited with voting
- Number of federal write-in voters credited with voting
- Number of out-of-state, overseas and service voters credited with voting
- Total number of voters credited with voting even though their ballots were postmarked after Election Day and were not counted.

Any other info the auditor deems necessary to reconcile the number of ballots counted with the number of voters credited with voting.

Tabulation & Certification Period

Counties with more than 75,000 people must process absentee ballots daily; smaller counties must process ballots every third day (existing law).

The certification period for the general election is extended from 15 to 21 days, providing more time for military and overseas ballots to arrive.

Recounts and Election Challenges

During a recount, previously excluded ballots can be included only in a case of election worker error, but not voter error.

The Secretary of State may require all recount abstracts to be submitted on the same day; all counties may be required to certify a recount on the same day.

Election challenges must be filed within 10 days of certification, rather than 10 days after issuance of the certification of election.

Crimes & Penalties

Destroying, altering, or discarding a completed registration form or provisional ballot signature affidavit is a gross misdemeanor.

Voting twice, or double voting, is a class C felony.

Study

The Office of the Secretary of State is required to study the impact of current law that allows certain judicial and OSPI candidates who receive a majority of votes at the primary to be the only candidate listed on the ballot at the general election.